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# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**THE INTELLIGENCE PROBLEM OF POLICYMAKERS  
IN COUNTERINSURGENCY: ASKING AND  
ANSWERING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS**

by

Andrew D. Swedlow

December 2013

Thesis Advisor:  
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David Tucker  
Douglas Borer

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<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.				
<b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)</b>		<b>2. REPORT DATE</b> December 2013	<b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b> Master's Thesis	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> THE INTELLIGENCE PROBLEM OF POLICYMAKERS IN COUNTERINSURGENCY: ASKING AND ANSWERING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS			<b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Andrew D. Swedlow				
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A			<b>10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government. IRB Protocol number ____N/A____.				
<b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited			<b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>	
<b>13. ABSTRACT</b> <p>Despite the volumes of material written on the conduct of counterinsurgency operations, little work has examined what intelligence is required to provide national policymakers with the information they need to make good decisions governing counterinsurgency. This thesis first reviews the problems experienced in Afghanistan with the collection and dissemination of intelligence from ground units to the national policymakers. It then takes a look at intelligence process doctrine encapsulated in service manuals of the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, as well as joint service intelligence doctrine, and determines that priority intelligence requirements are not being properly articulated to obtain the answers policymakers require.</p> <p>After a review of counterinsurgency doctrine and theories, this thesis proposes three priority intelligence requirements for use in counterinsurgency operations. These three intelligence requirements focus on: 1) supporting operations that attack the insurgency's support infrastructure; 2) identify host-nation government personnel or institutions that are not effectively supporting counterinsurgency policy; and 3) revealing how the insurgency is undermining popular support for the government. This thesis identifies a way to get the answers to those priority intelligence requirements from the ground units to the policymakers in a usable form.</p>				
<b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Counterinsurgency, intelligence assessment, assessment, priority intelligence requirement, PIR, essential elements of information, EEI, insurgency, structured analytic techniques, intelligence requirement, legitimacy, corruption, Cuba, Egypt, Iranian Revolution, Ba'ath Party, Iraq, ISR, HUMINT, SIGINT, Afghanistan			<b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 73	
			<b>16. PRICE CODE</b>	
<b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b> Unclassified	<b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b> Unclassified	<b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b> Unclassified	<b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UU	

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**THE INTELLIGENCE PROBLEM OF POLICYMAKERS IN  
COUNTERINSURGENCY: ASKING AND ANSWERING THE RIGHT  
QUESTIONS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

Despite the volumes of material written on the conduct of counterinsurgency operations, little work has examined what intelligence is required to provide national policymakers with the information they need to make good decisions governing counterinsurgency. This thesis first reviews the problems experienced in Afghanistan with the collection and dissemination of intelligence from ground units to the national policymakers. It then takes a look at intelligence process doctrine encapsulated in service manuals of the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, as well as joint service intelligence doctrine, and determines that priority intelligence requirements are not being properly articulated to obtain the answers policymakers require.

After a review of counterinsurgency doctrine and theories, this thesis proposes three priority intelligence requirements for use in counterinsurgency operations. These three intelligence requirements focus on: 1) supporting operations that attack the insurgency's support infrastructure; 2) identify host-nation government personnel or institutions that are not effectively supporting counterinsurgency policy; and 3) revealing how the insurgency is undermining popular support for the government. This thesis identifies a way to get the answers to those priority intelligence requirements from the ground units to the policymakers in a usable form.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>THE INTELLIGENCE PROBLEM IN COIN .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>THE PROBLEM.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>PRIORITY INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>WHAT IS AN INSURGENCY? .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>METHODS OF CONDUCTING AN INSURGENCY .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>WHAT INFORMATION DO POLICYMAKERS AND MILITARY COMMANDERS NEED TO WIN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY? .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>PIR #1: WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE AND SOURCES OF THE INSURGENCY'S SUPPORT? .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>PIR #2: WHICH HOST-NATION GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR INSTITUTIONS ARE NOT EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTING COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS? .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>PIR #3: HOW IS THE INSURGENCY MANIPULATING THE POPULATION TO DEGRADE SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT? .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>COUNTERINSURGENCY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>HOW DOES THE MILITARY GET THE ANSWERS TO THE PIRS FROM THE COLLECTOR TO THE POLICYMAKERS? .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>WRITTEN COUNTERINSURGENCY ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FORMAT DEVELOPED FROM INTELLIGENCE FAILURE ....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>LIST OF REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....</b>	<b>59</b>

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CJ2	combined/coalition joint intelligence section
COIN	counterinsurgency
EEI	essential elements of information
HUMINT	human intelligence
IED	improvised explosive device
ISR	intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance
J2	joint staff intelligence section
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSINT	open source intelligence
PIR	priority intelligence requirements
S2	battalion/brigade level intelligence section
SIGINT	signals intelligence

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Initially, I would like to thank COL Chris Miller for telling me about the Defense Analysis master's program at NPS and writing a letter of recommendation to assist me in gaining acceptance into the program. I also would like to thank LTC Eric Remoy for also writing a letter of recommendation.

I also appreciate the faculty and staff of the Defense Analysis Department for their expertise and teaching during the past year-and-a-half. The program has been challenging and rewarding. I particularly would like to single out Professor David Tucker and Professor Doug Borer for their advice and mentorship during the research and composition of this thesis. Without their help, this thesis would have been an insurmountable challenge.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Kate. She willingly gave up her life as an attorney to become an Army wife and follow me across the country. Her review of over twenty papers I have written in the last year-and-a-half has been a significant contribution to my graduate education. Additionally, her love and patience have made going through this graduate program at the Naval Postgraduate School possible.

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# **I. THE INTELLIGENCE PROBLEM IN COIN**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Joint Publication 2–0 states, “Information is of greatest value when it contributes to or shapes the commander’s decision-making process by providing reasoned insight into future conditions or situations” (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication [JP] 2–0: Joint Intelligence* I-1). This information becomes intelligence when it is combined with historical context and other information on the operational environment (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2–0: Joint Intelligence* I-1). Intelligence is only deemed useful when it meets clearly articulated intelligence requirements sent to the intelligence community by consumers. Intelligence agencies should produce intelligence products based on these requirements (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2–0: Joint Intelligence* I-2). At least, that is how it is supposed to work.

According to MG Flynn and a subsequent study conducted by the Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence, policymakers are suffering from a lack of intelligence when making decisions that have to do with the conduct of counterinsurgency operations (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor; Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence). The reason they are lacking proper intelligence to support their decision-making is because they are not abiding by the traditional intelligence cycle. They are not identifying and prioritizing their intelligence collection requirements to support the policy decisions they will have to make (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 29–30). This lack of identified intelligence requirements is exacerbated by the near-complete reliance on the military to collect the intelligence needed for these decisions (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 61). This leads to an almost exclusive focus of military intelligence assets for identifying enemy personnel for a military unit to kill or capture because the military has focused on counterterrorist operations and force protection (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 63).



If policymakers or senior intelligence officials were to use the intelligence cycle and produce an effective prioritized list of intelligence requirements for counterinsurgency operations, a portion of the problem would be addressed. When the policymakers give proper counterinsurgency intelligence collection priorities, and intelligence officials and military leaders are held to the requirements, policymakers will begin to get what they need. That leaves the question of how to get the information from the military units to the policymakers.

To achieve this goal of moving the crucial intelligence from the ground units to the policymakers requires the refinement of current doctrine on the production of intelligence assessments. Written assessments that start with policy recommendations will help to accomplish this task. If an intelligence section uses written assessments that start with a policy recommendation, it will tend to influence the intelligence sections and units to support their recommendations with facts. These facts can be retrieved through the intelligence process. In short, the solution is the development of priority intelligence requirements to support decision-making at the policymaker level and written assessments that help to move that intelligence up the chain and provide more information than bullets on a PowerPoint slide.

In this chapter, the problem of a lack of prioritized intelligence requirements will be examined. Additionally, the process of how intelligence requirements are supposed to be developed and prioritized in joint, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Army doctrine will be described. This doctrine will show how the intelligence process focuses on the identification and reassessment of priority intelligence requirements to support decision-making and intelligence production. This process is nearly identical in the three doctrines.

In the chapters that follow, different approaches to counterinsurgency campaigns will be examined to determine those intelligence requirements that would be needed to successfully execute a counterinsurgency campaign using joint, Army, and Marine Corps doctrine. Once those intelligence requirements are identified, an assessment format will be recommended to move the collected intelligence from the military units that collected it to the policymakers.

This by no means assumes that civilian intelligence personnel and agencies are not collecting the information that policymakers require for effective decision making in counterinsurgency situations. This thesis focuses on the contribution of military intelligence to counterinsurgency intelligence collection and production. The goal of this thesis is to identify the answers to two questions. First, what do policymakers need to know to manage counterinsurgency operations? Second, how should military units communicate the answers to the questions? An understanding of the intelligence cycle is required to begin to answer these two questions.

## **B. THE PROBLEM**

The traditional intelligence cycle consists of seven steps (Betts 15):

1. Policymakers identify what they need to know and intelligence professionals develop the requirements.
2. People or organizations are assigned the task to collect the data to fill the requirement.
3. The needed information is collected and reported.
4. The collected information is analyzed.
5. The analyzed intelligence is then placed into a finished product for consumption.
6. The finished product is disseminated to those who need it and throughout the intelligence community.
7. The final step is a policymaker makes a decision or another requirement is levied.

The steps of this cycle apply to all intelligence activities and operations, to include counterinsurgency operations. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. Marine Corps, and the U.S. Army all have similar intelligence cycles in their doctrinal manuals. Some have fewer components, but all the ones listed above are included as components or subcomponents of their respective intelligence cycles. Despite the uniformity of the intelligence cycle, the existence of this doctrine does not necessarily mean it is being followed.

In January 2010, Major General Michael Flynn, Captain Matt Pottinger, and Paul Batchelor wrote an article while deployed to Afghanistan that shows this doctrine is not

being applied. Their article states that General Stanley McChrystal and President Obama were not getting the information they needed to make effective decisions regarding management of the war in Afghanistan. MG Flynn had been serving as the CJ2 for the International Security Assistance Force for six months when the article was published (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 3). He was the senior U.S. intelligence officer in Afghanistan at the time (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 4).

Flynn et al. wrote:

Having focused the overwhelming majority of its collection efforts and analytical brainpower on insurgent groups, the vast intelligence apparatus is unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which U.S. and allied forces operate and the people they seek to persuade. Ignorant of local economics and landowners, hazy about who the powerbrokers are and how they might be influenced, incurious about the correlations between various development projects and the levels of cooperation among villagers, and disengaged from people in the best position to find answers—whether aid workers or Afghan soldiers—U.S. intelligence officers and analysts can do little but shrug in response to high level decision-makers seeking the knowledge, analysis, and information they need to wage a successful counterinsurgency. (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 7)

This quote is revealing because in 2009 the United States drafted the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* largely prepared by the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the United States Agency for International Development. In this guide, the authors identified five components of a successful counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 3):

1. Politics: the reconciliation of the belligerents and the reform of the government (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 3). It is the most important because the success or failure of the campaign relies on the government's ability to reform (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 2).
2. Economic: The government and its supporters must be able to improve the economic conditions of the populace (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 3).
3. Security: Security needs to progress while the first two components are being improved (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 3). It cannot exist on its own when the economy is poor and the political situation is not conducive.
4. Information: Information refers to intelligence, understanding, and influence (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 3).

5. The last component is establishing governmental control (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 3). Government control is largely a byproduct of the effective use of the first four components (Kilcullen, Porter and Burgos 18).

These components, which are listed in order of priority, show one of the key points of the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*. Military solutions to an insurgency rarely work alone. Counterinsurgency requires the cooperative efforts of civilian and military operations to be successful. The guide asserts that non-military means are usually more effective than military means (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). “The lesson to be learnt [sic] is that even if an armed insurgency is defeated, the political and subversive struggle will go on and can still win...” (Thompson 47). This statement alludes to the fact that the military means must be aligned with the political. According to the guide, the military cannot successfully prosecute a counterinsurgency campaign on its own (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). Operations focused on attacking insurgents cannot defeat an insurgency; they can only delay it from winning if there are no political improvements. Therefore, the intelligence collection in a counterinsurgency cannot be devoted wholesale to the identification of human targets to kill or capture. It must also focus on identifying other attributes that are imperative to conducting a successful counterinsurgency campaign. This devotion of assets to identifying enemy to kill or capture is indicative of a lack of proper priority intelligence requirements. Policymakers need information on the population and its effect on the insurgency. For example, the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* states that counterinsurgency policy must address popular grievances and the host nation government’s ability or willingness to address these grievances (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 19). For policymakers to be able to address grievances of a foreign population, they must know what grievances exist. They likewise must know what institutions or persons within the supported government are unable or unwilling to implement reform so that a plan to address this issue can be implemented.

The problem of a lack of proper intelligence requirements is at every echelon from the battalion level S2 (Intelligence Section) to the joint staff level J2 (Intelligence Section). The battalion level intelligence sections lack manpower to digest the mountains of information they receive from patrol debriefs, censuses, and the normal intelligence

reports generated by human intelligence (HUMINT) collectors and signals intelligence (SIGINT). Add on top of that the analysis that is required of the significant enemy activity in a maneuver unit's area of operations and there is an enormous amount of work for an undermanned intelligence section (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 7). This large amount of work and limited resources forces intelligence sections to have to prioritize work. If commanders do not clearly identify priorities, then intelligence professionals, due to their limited resources and time, will do so on their own. With the significant amount of casualties caused by improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the most probable focus of an undermanned intelligence section will be on catching the people utilizing these weapons (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 7). Only proper oversight from commanders can help to address this issue.

“Intelligence oversight and the production and integration of intelligence in military operations are inherent responsibilities of command” (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0 I-1*). Commanders at every level are relied upon to set priorities when the intelligence section is undermanned to meet the requirements of the mission. Without that guidance, intelligence sections are left to determine what is important through trial and error or through the judgment of the individual S2. This is exactly what was happening in Afghanistan (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 7–8). Commanders were not providing enough guidance on what information was important to be analyzed, so the information and intelligence needed by higher echelons was not being analyzed and written into assessments (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 7).

This complex problem is exacerbated at the brigade level and higher. Brigade Commanders are appalled by the number of casualties suffered in IED attacks and spend a large portion of their intelligence manpower on trying to identify the people or organizations emplacing these weapons (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 7). This effect spills over into collection management where our technical means of collection are used around the clock to identify and locate these terrorist cells (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 8). The overemphasis on enemy-focused collection efforts was identified as a problem in a paper released by RAND. The paper states that the military tends to focus on enemy centric intelligence because it leads to action. This in turn means that the

outcomes of the intelligence production are tangible and easily measured. Intelligence collected on the population, not involving a raid to kill or capture an enemy combatant, does not. The intelligence section gets immediate feedback on intelligence focused on the enemy and may not in other forms of intelligence (Connable 12). Intelligence leaders misinterpret this feedback as prioritizing enemy focused intelligence. This immediate feedback may also lead commanders to incorrectly prioritize enemy centric intelligence. In either case this leads to a lack of knowledge and collection on other factors fueling the insurgency.

In one instance, the White House requested a theater-level assessment on a specific subject involving the insurgency in Afghanistan, but the multitude of theater level analysts did not have enough information to craft an assessment based on reporting (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 9). General McChrystal was even more precise when he stated, “Our senior leaders—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, Congress, the President of the United States—are not getting the right information to make decisions with...The media is driving the issues. We need to build a process from the sensor all the way to the political decision makers” (Flynn, Pottinger and Batchelor 9). This demonstrates why even politicians will look to the news for information before they will consult military intelligence sources (Flynn, Pottinger and Batchelor 9).

After the Flynn article was published, the Defense Science Board Task Force was given the task of researching the problems being faced with regards to intelligence collection for counterinsurgency operations. The Defense Science Board found that a comprehensive set of intelligence requirements for counterinsurgency operations does not exist (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 62). Not only do comprehensive intelligence requirements for counterinsurgency not exist, neither do intelligence requirements to support a whole-of-government solution as dictated by the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 40). Identifying requirements is the first step in the intelligence process. If that first step is not fulfilled, then the policymakers cannot make effective decisions. Policymakers do not receive vital

information because that information is either not collected or not reported because it is not deemed to be important and does not address a requirement.

The Defense Science Board Task Force also determined that there is confusion amongst Department of Defense leadership on counterinsurgency. Some defense leaders cannot differentiate between counterinsurgency, counterterrorist operations, and foreign internal defense (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 22). This confusion further exacerbates the problem of a lack of intelligence requirements for counterinsurgency operations. This confusion means that people in positions of authority over the intelligence system may prioritize collection efforts thinking that they are addressing the insurgency when they are not. It will also lead to an increase in the application of intelligence collection assets against counterterrorist targets because of the immediate feedback that type of operations provides.

The lack of requirements and predilection to focus on enemy centric intelligence also spills over into the collection effort of Department of Defense organizations. The Board found evidence that intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) assets are primarily being employed in support of counterterrorist operations and force protection in Afghanistan. They also found that ISR employment in theater is wholly ineffectively employed against intelligence requirements dealing with the population (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 29–30). Both of these problems are indicative of a lack of proper priority intelligence requirements and confusion about counterinsurgency operations.

The report published by the Defense Science Board Task Force stated that the absence of Department of State assets to fill intelligence requirements has shifted those requirements onto the Department of Defense (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 14). The problem with these requirements being levied on the military is that they do not get fulfilled. Commanders in Afghanistan were not requesting population centric intelligence from their S2s (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 30). Commanders are primarily focused on applying their limited intelligence assets to allow their forces to maneuver on and capture or kill an armed enemy (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task

Force on Defense Intelligence 34). It is impossible to get proper intelligence to policymakers if intelligence collection requirements are not properly balanced between filling counterinsurgency, counterterror, and force protection requirements (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 30).

Another problem identified by the Defense Science Board was the complete exclusion of certain ISR assets that are fundamentally important to counterinsurgency operations. They reported that when senior civilian and military leaders refer to Department of Defense ISR assets, they are commonly referring to the technical means of collection to the exclusion of HUMINT, open source intelligence (OSINT), and other information coming from the social sciences that are extremely important to counterinsurgency policymakers (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 13).

This leads into another problem. When leaders limit their view of the assets available, they also limit their means of collection and do not effectively or efficiently collect the information that is needed. The Defense Science Board found that this was the case as well. They found that primarily technical collection assets were used to fill intelligence requirements. They concluded that non-traditional means of collection received little support or funding (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 14).

All of these issues feed into the problem of counterinsurgency requirements, when they exist, being held at a lower priority than counterterror or force protection requirements (Dept. of Defense, Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence 14). Since September 11, 2001, there has been a significant increase in the number of private companies and organizations conducting analysis on unclassified resources. The government on the other hand decided to focus mostly on classified collection and analysis (Betts 4). This problem has evidently spilled over into the intelligence analysis in counterinsurgency operations.

Flynn et al. propose several changes to the intelligence system to fix the problems they identified. One of the solutions was to have civilian analysts travel throughout



Afghanistan to get the desired intelligence and information and carry it back to headquarters (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 10). Another solution proposed was the use of a written assessment instead of the PowerPoint methods used in recent years (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 23). Yet another solution recommended was the establishment and proper manning of Stability Operations Information Centers (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 23).

While these solutions proposed by Flynn et al. may address a portion of the problem, they are also resource-intensive in an era where the United States and NATO are preparing to draw down forces in Afghanistan. Applying current service doctrine on intelligence in this case may help to solve some of the problem. Using the current doctrine of developing priority intelligence requirements (PIR) will help to alleviate some of these issues when it comes to counterinsurgency operations. The whole intelligence cycle begins with identifying what it is that decision makers need to know to make a decision. These requirements drive the whole process.

This does not mean that the military should sit and wait for instructions from its elected leaders on what to collect. Military staffs should conduct proper mission analysis to determine what intelligence requirements pertain to the fight they face, whether that is a full-scale war or smaller contingencies. If the national level intelligence requirements exist, then the military should definitely utilize its significant resources to assist in the collection efforts.

Paul R. Pillar, a former national-level intelligence officer with expertise on the Middle East, states that intelligence requirements at the policymaking level are developed by a combination of policymaker concerns and intelligence officer decisions (16). If these requirements are not identified early and a focused plan to attain the answers is not implemented, it is no wonder that policymakers do not get the information they need. The Marine Corps manual on intelligence states it concisely: “Once approved and distributed, PIRs constitute the core of the commander’s guidance for the intelligence process” (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication [MCWP] 2-1: Intelligence Operations* 3-5). Without this core guidance, the intelligence community is rudderless.

Doctrine on the development of PIRs is relatively similar between joint, Army, and Marine Corps manuals on intelligence. They all focus on identification of intelligence requirements during the planning process that are then prioritized by a commander to answer key questions the commander or policymaker needs to answer to make decisions.

### **C. PRIORITY INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS**

The Joint Staff, U.S. Army, and U.S. Marine Corps all use similar doctrine for intelligence collection. They all start with the identification of intelligence requirements. These requirements are then prioritized and a commander identifies which are going to be priority intelligence requirements. These PIR are then distilled into smaller questions that are tasked to assets to answer. That is why identifying the proper PIR is critical to solving intelligence problems in counterinsurgency operations. The answers to the PIR should lead to policy decisions that determine the outcome of the counterinsurgency operation.

The U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army, and the U.S. Joint Staff have similar processes and descriptions of the development of PIR. All the services begin with the identification of intelligence requirements. Joint and Army doctrine state that the staff develops intelligence requirements during the mission analysis process (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-8; U.S. Dept. of the Army, *Army Tactics, Techniques and Procedures [ATTP] 2-01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 1-7, 1-8). Marine Corps doctrine dictates that the intelligence officer develops an initial list of proposed intelligence requirements that are refined through the mission analysis process. The rest of the staff and subordinate commanders help in this process of refining the intelligence requirements (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *MCWP 2-1: Intelligence Operations* 3-4, 3-5).

Once the intelligence requirements are identified, PIRs are selected from the list of intelligence requirements produced during the mission analysis process. In joint doctrine, each staff member can advocate for a specific intelligence requirement to become a PIR (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-8). The staff will have to take into account the requirements of higher, subordinate, and adjacent units in

the development of PIRs (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-10; U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *MCWP 2-1: Intelligence Operations* 3-5; U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2-01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 2-4). So how are PIR differentiated from regular intelligence requirements?

The Marine Corps' manual on intelligence says that PIR are differentiated from normal intelligence requirements because they are tied to a specific decision the commander needs to make that will determine the outcome of the operation (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *MCWP 2-1: Intelligence Operations* 3-3). Joint Publication 2-01 has a similar definition of PIR. It states that PIR are the intelligence requirements that are the most important to the commander in accomplishing his mission (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication [JP] 2-01: Joint and National Intelligence Support to Military Operations* III-5).

In the end, the commander is the final decision authority on what becomes a PIR in all three instances (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-8; U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *MCWP 2-1: Intelligence Operations* 3-5; U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2-01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 1-5). The commander should not have more PIRs than collection assets. Limiting the number of PIRs also keeps the intelligence section from overwhelming the commander with useless information and allows the intelligence section to focus collection and analysis efforts (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-8; U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2-01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 1-7). PIRs should also be listed in order of precedence to allow for the intelligence staff to prioritize collection asset allocation to fill the requirement (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-8; U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *MCWP 2-1: Intelligence Operations* 3-5). This prioritization is never final, nor is the list of PIR.

It is important to remember that PIR will change throughout military operations due to changes in the environment or requirements being answered. As the situation changes, the PIR should be updated to remove PIR that have already been answered or are deemed to be irrelevant due to changes in the environment (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2-0: Joint Intelligence* I-8; U.S. Dept. of the Navy, *MCWP 2-1: Intelligence*

*Operations* 3–5, 3–6). The prioritization should also be updated to reflect the level of importance of each requirement based on changes in the environment and upcoming decisions that will have to be made.

Once a commander approves the PIRs, the intelligence staff should develop Essential Elements of Information (EEI). EEIs are more specific questions that help to answer a much broader PIR (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2–0: Joint Intelligence* I-8, I-9; U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2–01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 1–7). Collection assets are then assigned to answer the EEIs during a specific timeframe in the unit’s collection plan. In the U.S. Army’s doctrine, EEIs are developed from the PIRs. Once the EEIs are developed, specific indicators are identified that help to determine what the enemy is doing or how the environment is impacting operations (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2–01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 2–6). These indicators are turned into questions called specific information requirements that are then tasked to subordinate units or assets to be answered (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2–01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 2–6).

If the PIR are developed and selected according to service and joint doctrine and receive command emphasis, they should be getting answered. PIR are the beginning of the intelligence cycle. For the intelligence to get to the policymaker, it has to be analyzed and turned into a final product. This is where intelligence assessment production comes into play.

Production of intelligence assessments should be linked to the PIR approved by the commander (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2–0: Joint Intelligence* I-2). The identification of information that fulfills a PIR is a function for the whole staff. Information arrives at a headquarters in different forms. Each staff section should identify which pieces of information satisfy requirements and provide those to the intelligence section (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *ATTP 2–01: Planning Requirements and Assessing Collection* 4–3). Intelligence fusion consists of using all sources of information available to answer a given requirement while avoiding bias and deception (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 2–0: Joint Intelligence* II-11).

In the next chapter, different approaches to counterinsurgency operations will be reviewed. These approaches will be used to find similarities and to identify key components that counterinsurgency operations must address. In Chapter III, these key components will be used to identify proposed PIR that can be modified to fit the environment and provide the information needed by policymakers. The final chapter will address how to write an assessment that provides the information needed by policymakers to make effective policy decisions with regard to counterinsurgency operations.

## II. COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

### A. WHAT IS AN INSURGENCY?

The *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* defines insurgency as, “the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify or challenge political control of a region. As such it is primarily a political struggle, in which both sides use armed force to create space for their political, economic and influence activities to be effective” (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). This definition of insurgency is similar to the one encompassed in *Joint Publication (JP) 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations*. JP 3–24 states that the use of violent means and subversion to attain a political goal of either overthrowing a sitting government or forcing it to change is an insurgency (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* I-1).

The Army and Marine Corps manual on counterinsurgency operations, the *Field Manual (FM) 3–24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency*, shows two extremes of how sitting governments are removed from power. The first example it gives is a “spontaneous explosion of popular will” such as the French Revolution in 1789 (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 1–2). The other extreme is depicted as the coup d’état where a small group of conspirators overthrows a government with little initial support from the population (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 1–2). FM 3–24 states that insurgency falls somewhere between these two ends of the continuum of internal wars (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 1–2).

David Galula has a similar explanation of an insurgency. Galula states there are three ways to wrest power from a government: revolution, plot, and insurgency. He defines a revolution the same way the FM 3–24 does and used the same example of the French Revolution (Galula 2). Plots differ from revolution in the number of people needed to execute them and because, according to Galula, revolutions are an “accident” which cannot be predicted but are explainable after they occur (Galula 2). Plots consist of

the same characteristics as the coup d'état described in FM 3–24. Galula states that the planning of a plot may take a significant amount of time, but the action is brief in duration and requires little public support to gain its initial objective of overthrowing a government (Galula 2). Galula uses these examples to paint a picture of the differences between these two methods of overthrowing a government and insurgencies. Galula states that insurgencies are, “a *protracted struggle* conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives leading to the final overthrow of the existing order” (Galula 2).

Based on these definitions and explanations, insurgencies are violent and/or non-violent means used to change a social or political order over a protracted period of time. This definition of an insurgency is important to understand because it helps to classify events for a person studying them for the purpose of determining how to defeat them. Now that we have a definition we need to know how an insurgency works to help further define what methods an insurgency uses to better be able to determine what needs to be known to defeat them.

## **B. METHODS OF CONDUCTING AN INSURGENCY**

Insurgencies are vastly different when compared to each other because they develop in different environments with different people, institutions, and cultures (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 11; Kitson 32). According to the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide*, all these insurgencies generally develop, “through some or all the stages of subversion and radicalization, popular unrest, civil disobedience, localized guerrilla activity, and widespread guerrilla warfare to open, semi-conventional armed conflict” (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 11). This progression tends to be slow and methodical because of the difference between the government’s capabilities and the insurgent’s capabilities at the beginning of an insurgency (Galula 3). The insurgency is not strong enough to contest the government outright at the beginning of the conflict (Galula 5). Most combatants prefer a quick and easy knock-out blow to end a conflict, but insurgents are forced to look for slow and protracted ways of warfare to counter the government (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-1).

This is due to the assets the government can leverage in a crisis, especially at the beginning of the conflict.

The government has the ability to leverage its security forces, diplomatic relationships, all branches of government, money, logistics systems, and communication systems. The insurgent has the ability to leverage its cause. It can use this cause to help grow throughout the conflict as long as it is successful (Galula 3–4). Insurgencies are said to, “start with nothing but a cause and grow to strength” (Kitson 29). The cause that the insurgent chooses is extremely important to the success of the insurgency. The cause is used to develop the insurgency’s ideology and is the driving force behind recruiting people to the insurgent’s camp at the outset of the conflict (Galula 8). Frank Kitson explained it simply by saying, “it is in men’s minds that wars of subversion have to be fought and decided” (31).

There are many methods of conducting insurgencies proposed by people such as Mao Tse Zedong, Giap, and others, but Frank Kitson states that they are not necessary. There are only two things that an insurgent leader must accomplish. He must gain some support from the population and either militarily defeat the government in battle or harass the government until it loses its support (Kitson 32). In some cases, this may be easier than it seems for according to Sir Robert Thompson the government only has around 15% of the population as hardcore supporters and 85% are neutral and are available for recruiting to either side of the conflict (63). Malaya proved to be different, where the insurgency was primarily communist and was seen as Chinese in origin and therefore had little chance of outright success (Thompson 63). The problem that the Malayan government faced was how to win over portions of the Chinese population of Malaya in order to defeat the insurgency (Thompson 63). This is similar to what the majority Shia government of Iraq needs to do with the Sunni population of Iraq. The insurgency, on the other hand, needs to procure the support of a portion populace and maintain it throughout the conflict (Kitson 32). A good cause or core grievance will help to accomplish this.

The cause must be one that the government cannot claim as its own; for if it does the insurgent will lose (Galula 13). According to David Galula the crisis in Malaya shows what happens when the government claims the insurgent’s cause as its own. The



communist insurgency claimed Malayan independence of British rule as its cause. The British effectively took the wind out of the sails of the insurgency by declaring their intention of granting Malaya independence (Galula 13).

JP 3–24 lists several causes or core grievances that insurgents typically manipulate to support their ends: identity, religion, economy, corruption, repression, foreign exploitation or presence, occupation, and essential services (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7). Causes linked to identity can cause significant tension between a population and the government and gain support from other governments or diaspora (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7). Sir Robert Thompson gave an example by using nationalism as a cause. He stated that nationalism could be used to separate the insurgency from the population and can also do the opposite. He states that the United States calling the insurgency in Vietnam the Viet Cong gave the insurgency the ability to claim nationalism as a cause when the United States used the term Viet in the description of the guerrillas. Thompson thought that the United States should have named the guerrillas something that made it harder for the guerrillas to claim a nationalist identity (Thompson 64).

The use of religion as a cause has similar characteristics as causes incorporating identity. It can set a religious group at odds with a government and draw on support from the co-religionists in other countries (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7). Religion can be used by the insurgency to harness strong emotions on the part of the population if they believe the government is conducting a war against their religion (Thompson 64).

The economy can also be used as a core grievance by an insurgency. The unequal distribution of wealth or a lack of jobs can be used to turn the population against a government (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7). The government can make significant progress in gaining support from the populace by improving the economy (Thompson 66). Conversely, the insurgency can use a lack of economic improvement or jobs as a cause. Gamaa Islamiyah used this grievance to recruit people to its cause in Egypt during the 1990s (Kepel 284). Gamaa Islamiyah capitalized on the lack of jobs for graduates of Egyptian schools due to a down turn in the

price of oil. Egypt was unable to provide the jobs needed for these educated people. Gamaa Islamiyah combined the economic cause with a religious cause by saying that Egypt's Christian Copts were getting an unequal share of money and influence in the government (Kepel 284).

A common core grievance that is closely tied to the economy is corruption. Corruption in the political system leads to a decrease in the government's legitimacy (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3-24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7). The revolution that occurred in Tunisia in 2011 is an example of this. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's family was deemed to be so corrupt and their lifestyles so opulent that it caused widespread outrage because the corruption was impacting job creation and the economy (Goldstone 11). Ben Ali's wife was particularly corrupt. She and her family took corruption to new heights by requiring businessmen to build her new mansions (Goldstone 12).

A government can also provide fuel to an insurgency through excessive repression, yet it must have capacity, and willingness, to suppress the insurgents. Repression can provide a cause to the insurgency and also degrade government legitimacy (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3-24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7). The Marine Corps' *Small Wars Manual* produced in 1940 states, "Abuses by officials in power and their oppression of followers of the party not in power, are often the seeds of revolution." (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 21) These repressive leaders provide the catalyst that leads to the revolution or insurgency. (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 21) Sir Robert Thompson states that the insurgency will use these governmental excesses to help fuel the insurgency's information operations (Thompson 35).

The presence of foreign military force or an occupation can also provide the cause for an insurgency. (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3-24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7) Frank Kitson uses the example of the communists in Vietnam prior to the Vietnam War as an example. Although the core cause of the communists was to establish communist control of all of Vietnam, which they knew had little appeal with the populace, they gained popular support by claiming their cause was the expulsion of the French occupiers (Kitson 30). When World War II ensued, they changed their cause to

expelling the Japanese occupiers. When that war ended, the cause again reverted to expelling the French (Kitson 30).

The lack of essential services also can provide a cause for an insurgency. The population will seek out an administration that can provide essential services and support whoever provides them (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3-24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-7).

Any one of these causes or any combination of these causes can be harnessed to propel an insurgency to grow in scope, if they gain the support of the populace. Frank Kitson states that the cause must have mass appeal, if it does not it must be adjusted to gain more support. If it has lost support it must be changed to gain back support. If it is impossible to find or adjust a cause or core grievance to gain support, than the insurgency must be abandoned because it is doomed to fail (Kitson 29).

Before open hostilities begin it is also important for most insurgencies to establish a party to gain the support of the population. The party needs to expand to gain the support of more and more of the population. This support is provided in the form of supplies, money, intelligence, or just remaining neutral and non-committal to either side in the conflict (Kitson 35). The party that is developed takes the cause or core grievance and uses that to increase the support for the insurgency (Kitson 48; U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 20).

Once the party is established or while it is being established, the insurgency is weak. Faced with the vast difference in capabilities it would be ludicrous for an insurgent to try to fight the government on the government’s terms. The insurgent must therefore find another method of contesting the government. Sir Robert Thompson sums up what the insurgent needs to accomplish by stating:

It is the secret of guerilla forces that, to be successful, they must hold the initiative, attack selected targets at a time of their choosing and avoid battle when the odds are against them. If they can maintain their offensive this way, both their strength and their morale automatically increase until victory is won. As a corollary, it must be the aim of the counter-guerilla forces to compel guerilla forces to go on the defensive so that they lose the initiative, become dispersed and expend their energy on mere existence.

Their condition then changes from one of automatic expansion to one of certain contraction, as a result of which both their strength and their morale steadily decline. (Thompson 115–16)

In short, the insurgency “wins by not losing” (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-3). The continued existence and effectiveness of the insurgency will degrade the government’s capabilities and control of the population (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-3). Insurgents contest the government by trying to remove the population’s acquiescence to the government (Galula 4).

The insurgent accomplishes this by perpetrating disorder and insecurity (Galula 6; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-3). It is much easier and cheaper for the insurgent to create disorder and insecurity than it is for the government to maintain order (Galula 6; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-3). The government must address the disorder because that is what the population expects the government to do (Galula 7). The government faces the fact that it has assets that it must protect and a responsibility to the population to do so. The insurgent does not face such a problem, lacking assets that it must protect and the lack of responsibility to a population allows it to operate more freely than the government (Galula 7; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* II-3).

The insurgency must choose a cause with mass appeal and maintain that appeal by either adding more causes or adjusting the cause to maintain the support of the populace. They must establish a party to keep the cause in the minds of the populace and to gain the support of the populace. Lastly they must contest government control. This is sometimes accomplished through direct military confrontation or by harassing the government until it loses legitimacy. So what must the government and its allies do to defeat and insurgency faced with the inflexibility that goes with its responsibilities?

## C. COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

In his book, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*, Sir Robert Thompson wrote two simple equations that he claims determine the outcome of insurgent warfare. First, he wrote: “legality + construction + results = the government.” Then, he wrote: “illegality + destruction + promises = the insurgents” (Thompson 68). These very simple equations help describe but do not explain effective counterinsurgency operations.

The first thing to understand about counterinsurgency operations is that the military may not be able to defeat the insurgency by itself (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 15; Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-3). Nonmilitary means are more effective in reestablishing government control (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). The *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* states that the intended end state of counterinsurgency operations “is a government that is seen as legitimate, controlling social, political, economic and security institutions that meet the population’s needs, including adequate mechanisms to address the grievances that may have fueled support of the insurgency” (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 4). This matches with the first of the three conditions for counterinsurgency success outlined in *JP 3–24*. They are a government that controls the social, political, economic, and security apparatuses legitimately; the isolation of the insurgency from the population; and the reintegration of insurgent group member and leaders into society (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-5).

The Marine Corps *Small Wars Manual* further explains the objective of counterinsurgency operations by stating that small wars are, “undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation” (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 1). The manual further states that approaches to supporting another government can be as small as providing an “administrative assistant” to the other extreme of the United States

military taking over the role of governing a nation (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 1).

A foreign military taking over the administrative functions of a supported government can give the insurgency additional causes to utilize. The adoption of such an extreme policy is not the best scenario. The *Small Wars Manual* only advocates this option in extreme cases and specifies handing control of the government back to the civil authorities as soon as possible (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter XV: Withdrawal” 1). JP 3–24 also advocates transitioning government control back to the supported government as soon as they are capable assuming responsibility (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* I-6). Sir Robert Thompson thought that the British ensuring Malaya had fully trained and functioning departments of government was one difference between the successful counterinsurgency operations the British conducted and the unsuccessful ones conducted by the United States in Vietnam (71).

What options are chosen to assist a government depends on the situation. The *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* states that an effective counterinsurgency strategy must address two issues. It should address political considerations and population security. These two issues must be given equal weight because an insurgency is an “armed political competition” (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 18).

Sir Robert Thompson’s five principles of counterinsurgency follow along similar lines. He states that first the government should seek to be independent, united, and economically stable (Thompson 50). This requires the government to establish its authority through focusing on its administrative structure by training government employees. It must also address corruption quickly so that it does not become another cause that the insurgency can claim (Thompson 50–52). The *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* states that the success of counterinsurgency operations depends on the government’s ability and willingness to reform and address core grievances (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). Even the best-planned operations in support of a government will fail if these grievances are not addressed (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-4).

His second principle states that the government must obey the law and not enact laws that can be interpreted as discriminatory towards a segment of the population. The fact that insurgents who violate the law must be prosecuted goes without saying, but government officials who break the law must also face the consequences (Thompson 52–4). The use of legitimate organizations as well as force when needed to establish law and order is important (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 7). Prosecutions of corrupt government officials and insurgents must be and appear to be legitimate. This will help in establishing law and order through legitimate organizations (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-15). One of the goals of counterinsurgency operations must be to bolster the legitimacy of government institutions in front of its people (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-1). After all a government that does not abide by its own constitution seriously undermines any efforts at effective counterinsurgency operations (Thompson 66). Additionally portraying the insurgency as criminals causes them to lose support (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-15).

This depends on how legitimate the supported government appears to be to the populace. Perception of illegitimacy or corruption in a government institution can lead to the use of the insurgency’s institutions if they are thought to be less corrupt. For example, in Afghanistan, the Taliban placed courts in each of the districts it controls (Nelson). The local populace used the Taliban courts to settle property disputes and in some instances murder trials were conducted. These courts are used because the Afghan government’s courts were deemed to be illegitimate and justice went to those who could afford it (Nelson).

The third principle is that the government must have a synchronized plan (Thompson 55). The plan must include police, military, political, economic, and social efforts to subdue the insurgency. The plan must prioritize actions and locations for those actions. The intent behind this plan is to force the guerrillas to have to react to the government rather than the other way around (Thompson 55).

The fourth principle is that the government security forces and its allies must focus on defeating shadow governments over armed insurgents. Thompson argues that

the government should focus on the individuals who move from the population to the guerrillas and back. When this group of people is targeted, it forces the armed groups to have to fight to survive (Thompson 55–57). This meets one of the requirements of the *Small Wars Manual* that states that operations should focus on stopping support from reaching the insurgents (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 7). Frank Kitson states that looking back at counterinsurgency operations it is clear that one of the first steps a government should undertake is the destruction of the political apparatus of the insurgency in order to deny it access to the population (67).

The last principle is that the government must secure its large population areas first and then work out from there (Thompson 57–58). According to joint doctrine this should be the main focus of the military commander under the directions of the civilian leadership (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-2). This security is hampered by the fact that as the guerrilla operations progress the government’s forces will feel the need to place small units to secure critical infrastructure throughout the area it controls. This will give the insurgency more targets to choose from and has the tendency of creating gentlemen’s agreements where the local units agree not to leave their installations if the insurgents agree not to attack them (Thompson 41). Often the outcome of the conflict for control of the population is determined by which side “gives the best protection, which one threatens the most, which one is likely to win,... So much the better, of course, if popularity and effectiveness are combined” (Galula 8–9).

Accomplishing all the tasks listed above takes time. Counterinsurgency operations can take decades to be successful (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-16). It takes time to build administrative capacity, build legitimate institutions, develop a synchronized plan to defeat the insurgency, defeat shadow governments, and establish security. It also requires intelligence. In the next chapter intelligence requirements will be identified that will provide the civilian and military leadership the information they need to be successful in counterinsurgency operations.



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### **III. WHAT INFORMATION DO POLICYMAKERS AND MILITARY COMMANDERS NEED TO WIN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY?**

In the absence of intelligence requirements levied from national level policymakers, the military must determine what intelligence requirements need to be answered to effectively deal with the situations they face. The intelligence requirements needed for combat operations may be different from those needed for counterinsurgency. Policymakers and military commanders require information on the support structure of the insurgency to be able to implement effective operations and policy during counterinsurgency operations. They need to understand how the insurgency is getting food, money, recruits, medicine, equipment, and intelligence to be successful. Having this information will help commanders and policymakers develop courses of action to interdict this support and cause the insurgency to degrade.

To be effective, the host-nation government must support counterinsurgency operations and work to bolster the government's legitimacy. That is why it is important for policymakers and military commanders to know the extent to which the host-nation government supports counterinsurgency operations. Identifying the agencies or people who are not supporting effective counterinsurgency practices will help policymakers and military commanders know what aspects of a government to focus resources on and who are the corrupt individuals that need to be prosecuted. Understanding how effectively a host-nation government supports counterinsurgency operations will also assist policymakers with the important decision of whether to intervene in the first place, and how long to stay.

Additionally, understanding how the insurgency is manipulating the population to degrade support for the government will help policymakers and commanders develop plans to assist a receptive host-nation government with addressing core grievances. Addressing core grievances will determine whether counterinsurgency operations are successful or not (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2; U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3-24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-4; U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5:*

*Counterinsurgency* 1–4). These three requirements are not exhaustive. The first two are supported by two recent studies conducted by the RAND Corporation: *Victory has a Thousand Fathers* and *Paths to Victory*. Joint and service doctrine as well as the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* support the third. Obviously, some information on the insurgents themselves will be needed to help with conducting security operations such as offensive targeting operations, but collection on insurgents should be balanced with collection to answer the priority intelligence requirements proposed in this chapter. Focusing intelligence assets too heavily on the enemy leads to some of the problems discussed in the first chapter. A balanced approach to counterinsurgency achieves the best results.

In 2010, the RAND Corporation conducted a study to determine what approaches to counterinsurgency operations are successful when they are properly employed. The RAND Corporation compiled their results in the book *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency*. The authors determined that the counterinsurgency practices prescribed in the FM 3–24, “received strong empirical support” (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 60). They characterized the practices written in the FM 3–24 with nine factors, which we discussed in the previous chapter: the COIN force established a perception of security in the areas it controlled, government legitimacy improved through reduction in corruption and improved governance, grievances were addressed, the COIN force improved relations with the populace, basic services were provided by the COIN force or the supported government, short-term infrastructure improvement was accomplished in areas under government control, the population provided intelligence to the government, a majority of the population supported the government, and the COIN force avoided culturally offending the populace (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 59–60).

In their study, they evaluated thirty insurgencies started after World War II and ended by the time the study was conducted. Of those thirty cases, eight were determined to be victories for the side conducting counterinsurgency operations. Of the eight victories, seven counterinsurgent forces had employed at least three factors of the

approach detailed in the FM 3–24. Of the twenty-two counterinsurgent force losses, only one counterinsurgent force had employed three of the factors of the FM 3–24 (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 60).

In 2013, RAND conducted a followup to expand on the previous study. It included more cases and sought to answer additional questions that the first study did not answer. This time the results were recorded in the book *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies*. In this book, the authors also considered the approach dictated in the FM 3–24 and had similar findings. The authors also utilized the same nine factors of the FM 3–24 they identified in *Victory has a Thousand Fathers* (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 114–5). The authors reviewed fifty-nine cases. Nineteen were determined to be counterinsurgent force victories (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 116). Again, the authors of the study determined that the “FM 3–24 receives strong empirical support” (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 115). All of the cases in which the authors determined that the counterinsurgent force had won employed at least four factors of the FM 3–24 in their counterinsurgency operations. The authors also determined that the counterinsurgent force that lost employed four or more of the factors prescribed in the FM 3–24 (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 115).

The FM 3–24 and other literature on counterinsurgency operations cover a lot of material. Of the approaches recommended by the FM 3–24 and other historical documents, which ones are the most important for shortening the duration of an insurgency and ensuring the victory of the counterinsurgent? Based on these approaches, what information is needed to successfully employ these approaches? The two studies mentioned above will help the intelligence community focus on the information that is important to providing proper intelligence support to counterinsurgency policymakers and military commanders.

Based on their study, the authors of *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers* came up with seven recommendations that they believe would lead to government victory in counterinsurgency operations. The first two recommendations are linked. They are: “Plan

to pursue multiple mutually supporting lines of operation in COIN” and “Build and maintain forces that are capable of engaging in multiple mutually supporting lines of operation simultaneously” (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 94). The authors found in their study that successful counterinsurgent forces tend to implement more good counterinsurgency practices than detrimental ones (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 95). They also determined that there is no set number of good practices required to win, but it is important for the counterinsurgent force and government to employ as many of the good practices as possible; thus the first two recommendations (Paul, Clarke, and, Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 95). This finding was confirmed in the subsequent study detailed in *Paths to Victory* (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 181).

The next recommendation the authors had was: “Ensure the positive involvement of the host-nation government” (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 95). The authors determined that the list of good practices they came up with was only successfully employed when counterinsurgent forces and the governments they were supporting both employed them. If the counterinsurgent force employed the good practices and the government did not, the outcomes were not favorable (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 96). Sir Robert Thompson would agree with this recommendation. He made a similar comment when he wrote, “Finally, if its cause is to be effective, the government must demonstrate both its determination and its capacity to win. These are the foundations of popular support... After all there are not many backers to a losing side” (Thompson 69). The United States Marine Corps’ *Small Wars Manual*, written in 1940, proposed going as far as having the military replace the civilian institutions if they are not fully supporting these operations (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 7). This demonstrates the importance of host-nation government support to counterinsurgency operations.

In the end, the government and counterinsurgent force wins when they apply more good practices of counterinsurgency than bad (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 96). This led to the authors' fourth recommendation: "Keep a scorecard of good versus bad factors and practices; if the balance does not correspond to the desired outcome, make changes" (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 96). This recommendation leads to the fifth recommendation: "Recognize that there is time to adapt" (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 97). The authors found in the study that initial failure of counterinsurgent forces to apply proper counterinsurgency practices did not necessarily dictate the final outcome of the operations. The counterinsurgent forces usually had time to change and implement new practices and strategies to effectively defeat the insurgency (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 97).

The sixth recommendation of the authors was: "Avoid using and discourage allies and partners from using repression and collective punishment in COIN" (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 98). The results of the study showed that overly aggressive practices could win phases but usually ultimately led to the defeat of the government and counterinsurgent forces (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 98). Of the eight counterinsurgency government victories the authors studied, only two applied repressive techniques, but they also applied enough good practices to counter the effects of their repressive acts (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 98). In *Paths to Victory*, the authors came to the same conclusion, stating that the repressive approach to counterinsurgency proved to be extremely ineffectual (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 181).

The final recommendation of the authors of *Victory has a Thousand Fathers* was: "Ascertain the specific support needs of and sources of support for insurgent adversaries and target them" (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of*

*Success in Counterinsurgency* 99). The authors of the study found that the insurgent's ability to receive "tangible" (not necessarily indigenous) support could predict the outcome of all thirty cases included in their study. In the eight counterinsurgent victories they studied, the government and its counterinsurgent forces were able to disrupt or stifle at least three aspects of insurgent support (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 98). The ten aspects of insurgent support the authors identified in their study were reduce cross-border support, reduce internal support, reduce external support, interfere with insurgent resupply activities, reduce the insurgency's ability to grow or stabilize in size, increase the cost of the insurgency's normal processes, reduce insurgent recruiting, interfere with insurgent's material procurement system, reduce the intelligence the insurgency receives, and reduce insurgent financing (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 70).

The authors also were able to determine that when the insurgents do not have the support of the population and get their support from exogenous forces, victory for counterinsurgent forces was achieved through successfully interdicting the support coming from outside the conflict area rather than focusing on popular support (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Sources of Success in Counterinsurgency* 98). Attacking an insurgent's support structure is not a new approach to counterinsurgency. The U.S. Marine Corps advocated for military operations to focus on cutting off support from reaching insurgents in its 1940 *Small Wars Manual* (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 7).

The 2013 study conducted by the RAND Corporation considered seventy-one insurgencies conducted since World War II and ended by 2010 (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 179). As stated earlier, this study confirmed the findings from the previous study that counterinsurgent force victory was usually achieved through the employment of multiple good counterinsurgency practices (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 181). The authors of *Paths to Victory* were able to narrow down the number of counterinsurgency concepts to the three most important ones as a result of their study. They determined that reducing the tangible

support available to the insurgency, the commitment of the counterinsurgent force and the host-nation government to the counterinsurgency effort, and a flexible and adaptive counterinsurgent force were imperative to the victory of counterinsurgent forces (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* 182).

To allow the supported government and the counterinsurgent force to properly disrupt or interdict support for the insurgency, the first Priority Intelligence Requirement should be, “What is the structure and sources of the insurgency’s support?” Fully illuminating the structure of the insurgent’s support system will allow better analysis and recommendations on how to interdict this support. After all, an insurgency that has no money, food, or equipment cannot sustain itself. Che Guevara’s insurgent operations in Bolivia are an example of this. His insurgency in Bolivia failed because he was unable to gain food to sustain the fighters he had and unable to recruit any more fighters (Kitson 34).

The second PIR should be, “What host-nation government officials or institutions are not effectively supporting counterinsurgency operations?” When this question is answered it will help determine who is negatively impacting the progress of counterinsurgency operations and may help to illuminate whom counterinsurgent forces should seek to work with and whom they should attempt to marginalize or remove, if that is an option. In the case of special operations forces, it may help to determine which security forces to partner with and which to avoid.

This PIR may also identify government agencies that need significant reform in order to meet the needs of the populace. Answering this requirement will help policymakers make the important decision of whether to get involved, and once involved, whether to stay. It will also help policymakers and military commanders identify corrupt officials who may be supporting the insurgency, giving the supported government the opportunity to improve their legitimacy by prosecuting these ineffective and criminal officials.

The third PIR should be, “How is the insurgency manipulating the population to degrade support for the government?” Although this proposed PIR is not supported by



the RAND study, the *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* states that it is important for the government to address the grievances of the population in order to gain or maintain the population's support (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 19). Additionally, JP 3–24 states, “the population is the critical dimension of successful COIN.” It goes on to state “understanding the population requires an intimate knowledge of the causes and ongoing grievances of the insurgency” (U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3–24: Counterinsurgency Operations* III-1). This PIR will help answer the previous two PIRs and may provide topics for counterinsurgent information operations to address. It may also provide information on what grievances the government may need to correct to take away the cause that the insurgency is using to gain support.

**A. PIR #1: WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE AND SOURCES OF THE INSURGENCY'S SUPPORT?**

To help identify what the insurgent support structure looks like, the intelligence community would need to identify the sources and methods of insurgent recruiting; the methods and sources of insurgent financing; the locations where insurgents store their food, medicine, ammunition, and weapons; the sources of the insurgent's supply of weapons, ammunition, and medical supplies.

Identifying the sources and methods of insurgent recruiting may help to provide information on how to counter the insurgents' efforts to gain personnel or replace personnel lost in their operations and make it harder to continue operations. Identifying the method of recruiting may also help to determine which members of the insurgency are hard-core and which ones may be susceptible to amnesty programs.

Sir Robert Thompson broke down insurgent recruits into three categories. The first category of recruit was what Thompson referred to as the “natural” (Thompson 35). According to Thompson, this category of insurgent is composed of ideologues to common criminals who may have suffered some sort of setback in life like the loss of a job, or failed a key exam, and may have a criminal record (35). These people may be harder to win over with amnesty programs because they are seeking to change the society (Thompson 35). They probably will not be susceptible to moderate concessions and

amnesty programs provided by the government. These individuals may need to be the target of information operations focused at discrediting them or raids to arrest or kill them.

The second category of recruit is the “converted” (Thompson 35). This category is composed of people who believe that they or someone they know has suffered an injustice at the hands of the government (Thompson 35). According to Thompson, this group is also composed of people who jumped onto the bandwagon when they perceived that the insurgency was sure to win (35). Gaining their support may be as simple as offering amnesty after the tide has been turned in favor of the government and counterinsurgent forces. To win over those who perceived that they, or someone they know, suffered an injustice at the hands of the government might require a bit more work. Such things as trials of government officials responsible for the injustice and reforms of institutions combined with amnesty programs could possibly pull some of these people back on the government’s side.

The third and final category of insurgent recruit Thompson identified was the “deceived” (36). This category includes people who joined the insurgency for what they considered to be good reasons and then were indoctrinated into the insurgents’ cause. According to Thompson, this category can include such cases as child soldiers, like the ones seen in Africa. These children can be victims of kidnapping who are hidden and indoctrinated by the insurgents (Thompson 36). These children are then led on a mission to attack an undefended village. The insurgents use the killing of the villagers by these children in an attempt to make the children feel guilty and thereby intensifying their identification with the insurgency (Thompson 36). This category of insurgent is probably the most susceptible to government amnesty programs.

If the insurgency is gaining recruits through the use of kidnapping or other criminal activity, it may dictate to a commander that additional resources need to be applied to counter this type of criminal activity. It also may indicate to policymakers that increased penalties for kidnapping may be needed to help increase the cost of conducting such criminal activity.

Identifying how the insurgents are recruiting members may also help with trying to get these recruits back on the side of the government. Offers of amnesty, jobs, or food could be used to help with causing defections when combined with operations aimed at cutting off support to the insurgency. Cutting off this support would also help with keeping people from joining the insurgency.

People would be less likely to accept the risk of joining an insurgent group if their future could foreseeably include hunger, significant injury, or inadequate equipment. Identifying the sources of finance and supply and interdicting them combined with other good counterinsurgency practices can expedite counterinsurgent and government victory. One example of this is the insurgency that occurred in El Salvador from 1979 to 1992. The government of El Salvador gradually improved its human rights records and its governance leading to a stalemate with the insurgents that was slightly in favor of the government in 1988 (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* 41). In 1992, the collapse of the Soviet Union cut the external support the insurgency relied on. This significant decrease in support and the improved institutions of governance made the El Salvadorian government's amnesty proposal palatable to the insurgents and ended the conflict (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* 41).

Senegal is another example of how the loss of tangible support can drive insurgents to accept reasonable government amnesty programs. In 1982, an insurgent group formed advocating for the separation of a portion of Senegal (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* 77). In 1989, an increase in arms smuggling from the countries surrounding the area controlled by the separatist movement provided enough support that the insurgents no longer needed to rely on local support and then became increasingly violent toward the local population (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* 79).

The conflict was forced to an end when the government's reforms were combined with an amnesty program that paid insurgents not to fight, and surrounding countries were pressured to cut support to the insurgents (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a*

*Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* 80). When this external support was significantly diminished, the insurgency could not turn back to the populace for support due to their heavy-handed treatment of the population (Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory Has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* 82). This case shows the importance of identifying countries providing support for the insurgency so that government agencies can apply pressure and diplomatic means to stem the flow of support across borders.

Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf Jr. proposed this approach to counterinsurgency operations in 1970. They stated that focusing on cutting off the sources of internal and external support for rebellions forces guerrillas to have to stop fighting and focus on “production” (Leites and Wolf 77). This shift from fighting makes the guerrillas extremely vulnerable to government and counterinsurgent operations. They also thought that operations wholly focused on killing or capturing insurgents were doomed to fail because with the support network still intact, the guerrillas could replace what they lost (Leites and Wolf 77). Leites and Wolf state that a balanced approach of targeting the insurgents and the support network is the key to successful counterinsurgency operations, “Waging successful counterinsurgency thus requires that attention be devoted to counter-production efforts, rather than counterforce efforts alone. R’s [guerrillas] armed forces are not unimportant for A’s [government] targeting, but they are less important than R’s organization and logistic network in reducing R’s effectiveness” (Leites and Wolf 78).

This approach requires significant government effort to help stem the flow of support to the insurgents operating in their country. Whether the sources of supply for the insurgency are internal or external the government and its security institutions will be relied upon to help cut the insurgents off from their supply. Border security organizations and customs officials are particularly important to impeding the flow of external support and police are extremely important to cutting off sources of internal support to the insurgency (Leites and Wolf 76). With this in mind, it is important to understand the extent to which the host-nation government supports the counterinsurgency operations.

**B. PIR #2: WHICH HOST-NATION GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR INSTITUTIONS ARE NOT EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTING COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS?**

The intelligence community should focus on trying to identify reforms that the government (local, regions, district, and/or national) needs to make to ensure that further grievances are not created. The intelligence community should also seek to identify corrupt or inefficient government officials and agencies to be removed or reformed in order to help determine how effectively the host-nation government is supporting counterinsurgency efforts. Corrupt officials and inefficient government agencies help contribute to the causes that the insurgents can use to get support and recruits.

The host-nation government's ability and willingness to reform is crucial to the success of counterinsurgency operations (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). Political strategies for defeating an insurgency rely on the host-nation government being able to reestablish its control in contested areas and to reform (Kilcullen, Porter, and Burgos 2). If a government is corrupt and violates its own constitution and laws it will seriously undermine any counterinsurgency operations (Thompson 66).

This idea was incorporated into Sir Robert Thompson's second principle of counterinsurgency. In this principle, Thompson stated that the host-nation government must obey the law and not enact any laws that can be determined to be discriminatory (52). He also advocated for publically prosecuting government officials who violate the law as well as insurgents (Thompson 53). These trials serve the purpose of demonstrating to the populace the government's level of commitment and the efficacy of government institutions.

The importance of the effective support of the host-nation government was also deemed to be of the utmost importance by the U.S. Marine Corps in the 1940 *Small Wars Manual*. In the manual, the authors recommended that the marines assume control of government agencies in the event that the initial arrival of the marines did not improve the situation (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 6). The *Small Wars Manual* went as far as to recommend the establishment of military government and then transitioning that government back to the native population as their agencies become

capable of handling their duties (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 6). The manual also advocated advising civil authorities of their duties and informing the populace of the responsibilities of the civil authorities (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter I: Introduction” 7).

Like Thompson, the *Small Wars Manual* advocated using civil institutions to punish officials who break the law or are corrupt (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter XII: Armed Native Organizations” 23). In a chapter written about the organization and arming of a constabulary, the authors advocated letting the leadership of the constabulary investigate alleged crimes of its members. It also instructed Marines to let the constabulary punish those convicted of a crime after the Chief Executive approved the conviction (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter XII: Armed Native Organizations” 23). This approach was intended to show the populace that the institutions of government are also subject to the laws of the land (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, “Chapter XII: Armed Native Organizations” 24).

The insurgency in Cuba that began in 1956 is an excellent example of how corrupt and ineffective host-nation governments and their institutions can cede victory to an insurgent organization. Batista, who had been in control of Cuba since 1934, was going to lose the Cuban presidential election in 1952 (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 104). Batista then conducted a coup to remain in power. His corruption and repression pushed most segments of the population away from supporting his government and dealt a significant blow to his government’s legitimacy (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 104). In 1958, President Eisenhower stopped the shipment of arms to the Batista regime and the U.S. State Department decided to not recognize Batista as the legitimate ruler of Cuba (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 108).

The decision to cut off Batista was reached after the failure of a major military operation that the Cuban military executed against Castro in the Sierra Maestra (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 108). This failed operation was effectively the last straw for the U.S. government. The United States had been considering stopping any support for Batista as a result of his lack of legitimacy with the

people of Cuba (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 107). It also became apparent that the military could not win against the insurgents. The military was disillusioned by the corruption in their top-ranking officers and in the lack of training. This led to high numbers of defections from the military to the insurgents (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 107).

Support for Batista was withdrawn in December 1958 and Batista fled Cuba in January 1959 (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 109). Less than a month had passed between the withdrawal of support and the collapse of the Batista regime indicating its extreme lack of legitimacy with the population (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 110). Batista's military was inefficient and began to defect as a result of corruption and inadequate training (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 107). Batista's corruption and repressive tactics drove the population to support the insurgency.

Gordon McCormick, Steven Horton, and Lauren Harrison noted that the defection of the military is often the first sign of host-nation government collapse during insurgencies (335). They also noted that the regime's staunchest supporters might begin to send family and money overseas in preparation for the inevitable collapse of the regime (McCormick, Horton, and Harrison 335). A requirement addressing the defection of the military or the movement of influential families and their assets out of the conflict region would be helpful in answering this PIR.

The defection of the military due to increased corruption of government institutions was also evident in the events of the Arab Spring in 2011. In Egypt, the military became ever more unhappy with the corruption of the Mubarak regime and especially when it became apparent that Gamal Mubarak was going to follow his father into control of Egypt. Gamal was a businessman and the military believed he was going to support businessmen at the expense of the military. This led the military to decide not to intercede on behalf of Mubarak during the Arab Spring (Goldstone 8–16).

Corruption also led to the loss of legitimacy of the Tunisian regime and caused its military to defect as well. Zine Abidine Ben Ali turned a blind eye to his wife's and her

family's corruption. His wife and her family took money and mansions from businessmen in return for favors from the government. When the protests erupted in Tunisia, the military decided not to intervene to keep Ben Ali's family in power (Goldstone 8–16).

These cases show that corruption can weaken the effectiveness of counterinsurgency operations and the legitimacy of supported governments. The last two cases show that corruption can significantly degrade the legitimacy of the supported government leading it to collapse. The Cuban case also showed that outside support for a government that is seen as illegitimate can only stall the fall of that government, not defeat an insurgency (Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Insurgency Case Studies* 110). Significant reforms still have to be made to ensure victory.

The corrupt or illegal actions of the government provides the insurgency with additional grievances and causes to use to gain support and recruits as well as evidence to use in the media to delegitimize the host-nation government. This leads to the third recommended PIR. It is important to understand how the insurgency is manipulating popular support for the government.

### **C. PIR #3: HOW IS THE INSURGENCY MANIPULATING THE POPULATION TO DEGRADE SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT?**

If acts of revolutionary violence are quixotic or inappropriate, they will not be tolerated by other members of the system, and instead of terminating the system they will be dealt with as forms of crime or lunacy. Acts of revolt “differ from simple crimes to the extent that collective support given the outlaws is not itself the result of coercion.” Therefore, when revolutionaries promote and other members of the system accept the return of war, the society itself must have become worse than war; and the desire for a better society, even at the expense of a temporary return to war, must have become widespread. (Johnson 12)

If insurgencies are considered to be criminal if the social system is not thought to be broken, then it is necessary to determine how the insurgency is manipulating public opinion to convince them that a government or society needs to change or is broken. Removing the causes of this belief will help to reduce the number of recruits for the insurgency and will help to solidify the end of the conflict.



Chalmers Johnson wrote in his book, *Revolutionary Change*, that the best counterinsurgency or counter guerrilla strategy consists of social change and security of the population (150). He thought that revolutionary war only comes about as a result of an elites' unwillingness to change. Guerrilla warfare ensues as a result of this political failure of the elites to accept that change in the social system is required (Johnson 150).

The Marine Corps' *Small Wars Manual* comes to a similar conclusion. It states that the causes of insurgencies are not military in nature and are the result of economic, social, or political issues that were allowed to fester and were not addressed when the government had the ability to address them (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 15). Emergencies then arise as a result of the issues coming to head and no longer allowing for a peaceful adjustment to the situation (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 16). Solving these problems then requires the balanced application of force and addressing the social causes of the unrest (U.S. Dept. of the Navy, "Chapter I: Introduction" 16).

It is therefore very important to identify the changes that a society or government needs to make to maintain legitimacy and control of their territory and population. Conflicts of extended duration usually require a cause as shown in the previous chapter. These causes are manipulated by the insurgency to change public opinion and support for the government. Paul Cornish states that insurgencies quickly realize that they can gain a distinct advantage in the domain of ideas to compensate for their physical weakness (77). He goes on to say that effective insurgencies can sum up their causes in single lines of text keying on causes of liberation, countering repression, throwing out occupiers, etc. (Cornish 77). The government and the counterinsurgent have an inherently much harder job of trying to counter these ideas and it is nearly impossible to do that with concise statements like the ones the insurgency benefits from (Cornish 77). Understanding what the insurgents claim to be fighting for can help to identify themes or messages that the supported government or counterinsurgent force may need to disseminate.

Open Source Intelligence is an excellent way of determining how the insurgency is attempting to manipulate the population's support for the government or counterinsurgency operations. It also would be a great way of identifying the narrative

the insurgency is using to gain popular support or to delegitimize the supported government. The 10th Mountain Division determined OSINT was an important component of its intelligence operations in Afghanistan in 2005. It created a cell within its intelligence section whose sole purpose was the analysis of OSINT and how public opinion was being swayed through news media for or against the government of Afghanistan (Levesque 55–57). The intelligence this cell produced was used to support the Division Public Affairs Officer and Information Operations. It helped to determine the effectiveness of the counterinsurgency strategies being employed through what they termed Information Operations Battle Damage Assessment (Levesque 55–57).

In the end, effective counterinsurgency operations require intelligence support. That intelligence support needs to focus on illuminating the insurgency's support structure so that military and diplomatic means can be leveraged to decrease the flow of money, men, equipment, and supplies to the insurgency. It also must focus on identifying personnel and agencies within the government that are working at cross-purposes with the counterinsurgency strategy to keep hypocrisy from being a cause adopted by the insurgency and to ensure the populace perceives the government as legitimate. Finally, the intelligence community needs to identify the way in which the insurgency is manipulating the population's support for the government. If this problem is addressed it may help to cut internal support for the insurgency and address the root causes for the crisis. The next part of the problem is how to get the answers to these problems from the units in the conflict area to policy makers. That problem will be addressed through the use of written intelligence assessments, as discussed in the next chapter.

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## **IV. COUNTERINSURGENCY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT**

### **A. HOW DOES THE MILITARY GET THE ANSWERS TO THE PIRS FROM THE COLLECTOR TO THE POLICYMAKERS?**

Once intelligence has been collected answering priority intelligence requirements, how is that information formatted and disseminated to the policymakers who need it? MG Flynn wrote that he believed the answer was in written assessments (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 23). He stated that not much information is shared through the use of PowerPoint slides with short bullet comments or color-coded spreadsheets. The key is a comprehensive written assessment that military commanders take the time to review carefully before it is published (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 23).

If a written assessment is the answer, then what is the format for such an assessment? The FM 3–24’s chapter on intelligence recommends writing assessments focused on comprehensive insurgency analysis (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 3–31). According to the FM 3–24, comprehensive insurgency analysis is comprised of nine tasks for analysts to accomplish in order to help commanders understand the nature of the insurgency they face (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 3–32). Analysts must work to identify insurgent goals; insurgent motivations; popular grievances insurgents use to their advantage; how culture impacts the insurgency and counterinsurgency; how social networks impact the insurgency; how social networks interact with one another; insurgent organizations; insurgent leadership; popular perception of the supported government, the insurgency, and counterinsurgent forces (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 3–32).

Not all of these aspects covered under comprehensive insurgency analysis will apply equally to different insurgencies or to the same insurgency in different places or times. This is due to the fact that all insurgencies are local in nature (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5: Counterinsurgency* 3–1). Additionally, intelligence in counterinsurgency is a bottom-up enterprise. In other words, the units who are directly in touch with the people are the ones that collect the most intelligence useful in determining

counterinsurgency policy and operations (U.S. Dept. of the Army, *FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5: Counterinsurgency* 3-1). They are also the units with the smallest intelligence sections. This is a fact not missed by MG Flynn. In his paper, he addresses the issue by recommending the staffing of Stability Operations Information Centers and states that analysts have much more of an effect the closer to the problem they are (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 22).

With this lack of personnel, an efficient and comprehensive method of writing intelligence assessments must be used to address what information is essential to the consumers of this intelligence. It is also imperative to not overburden the limited manpower and resources of the small intelligence shops that would be producing such intelligence assessments. So, what would an efficient method of writing an intelligence assessment look like? Robert Jervis provides an excellent proposal that can serve as the basis for just such a situation.

#### **B. WRITTEN COUNTERINSURGENCY ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FORMAT DEVELOPED FROM INTELLIGENCE FAILURE**

Robert Jervis was appointed to conduct a postmortem of the intelligence failures in the CIA leading up to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. In his investigation, Jervis was instructed to not focus on the quality of the information the analysts received, but to focus on the quality of the analytical work done (17). This focus means that he spent little time investigating problems with collection and more time looking at the process of analyzing the information that was collected. This serves the purposes of this chapter perfectly.

Jervis' investigation into the intelligence failures leading up to the Iranian Revolution has lessons that can be used to provide proper intelligence support to counterinsurgency operations. The timeframe the investigation encompassed was from the middle of 1977 until the end of 1978. Those two dates were chosen because minor protests against the Shah began at the beginning of this timeframe, and the U.S. government finally paid attention to the situation in Iran at the end of 1978 (Jervis 16).

Before getting into his assessment of the analysis conducted by the CIA leading up to the revolution, Jervis made a couple of comments that allude to intelligence

requirements not being properly levied. He stated that the U.S. government was unaware of the goals and grievances of the multitude of opposition groups (Jervis 17–18). It is apparent that no requirement was developed to answer this important question, which happens to be the third recommended priority intelligence requirement from the previous chapter addressing how the insurgency is manipulating the populace to degrade support for the government. This would have been helpful to understand the driving force behind the protests. No such requirement existed, for as Jervis pointed out, no U.S. government agency complained about any of the restrictions keeping them from getting this information (18). In the case of the religious opposition, it would have been as simple as going to the local bazaar to get a tape of one of Khomeini's sermons (Jervis 18).

Jervis found in his investigation that the CIA had only four analysts devoted to Iran despite the progressively deteriorating situation in Iran at that time (21). Another issue he found was that the intelligence community did not question policy advocated by the State Department or other agencies of government (Jervis 19). Jervis states that, “analysts are not permitted to comment on American policy. This is understandable since decision makers do not want kibitzing, but it can be a major defect when the other side's behavior is strongly influenced by what the United States is doing” (Jervis 19–20). Jervis stated that this aversion to commenting on policy was so ingrained in the analysts that when he mentioned to the analysts that they did not comment on policy matters, most of them had not realized it (20). Jervis did not go into depth on this topic because he believed that his postmortem would be used to further attack the Carter administration. Based on this belief, he deleted a significant portion of the report that covered this topic (Jervis 20).

This was an interesting finding because according to Richard Betts, policymakers expect intelligence not just to warn or inform them, but also to recommend what decision needs to be made or policy needs to be implemented (27). Betts also believes that for intelligence to be useful it must convince the customers that taking the time to read it is worthwhile (15). That is not always the case, as Jervis stated in his postmortem. Policymakers have a significant number of items to read in a given day and if the intelligence product does not deal with a decision that needed to be made immediately, it

did not get much attention (Jervis 22). Jervis assumed that since policymakers were not reading the assessments on Iran, other intelligence professionals were reading these assessments and questioning them. This was not the case (Jervis 22).

Jervis went into further detail in his postmortem. He found that analysts with expertise on Iran did not collaborate on their assessments. When they did hold meetings, the meetings were driven by personal initiative and not by institutional requirements or norms (Jervis 22). Additionally, economic analysts wrote a significant number of assessments on the economic crisis in Iran and political analysts wrote a large volume of material on the political crisis. Neither group coordinated with each other to see how the economic situation was impacting politics and vice versa (Jervis 22).

To avoid these problems, intelligence analysts dealing with an insurgency should write an assessment that begins with a detailed policy recommendation. This recommendation should focus on policy changes that would positively impact the counterinsurgency operations in their area. Any successful policy would deal with cutting off tangible support for the insurgency, addressing host nation political support for counterinsurgency operations, and address the core causes of the insurgency in the area of operations for that specific unit. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the policies advocated should not focus solely on military operations but also encompass social and political changes. General McChrystal understood this while he was in command in Afghanistan. He believed that the insurgency would be defeated by winning over the population, not by killing the enemy (Flynn, Pottinger, and Batchelor 24).

Ground units that have day-to-day contact with the population are better suited to compose these assessments because they should have a better understanding of the cultural considerations that impact policy decisions that have been made or are going to be made. Relying on academics to understand culture has its problems. For academic models to fit, they have to make some generalization such as assuming there is an “average Middle Eastern male” (Salmoni and Holmes-Eber 21). It can lead to overgeneralizations about the populace (Salmoni and Holmes-Eber 21). These overgeneralizations lead to faulty policy decisions or policy decisions that may affect one particular group or region and not others. The impacts of culture on a policy proposed by

analysts will differ; cultural considerations are often not consistent throughout a society (Salmoni and Holmes-Eber 21). Allowing analysts the freedom to propose policy will help to ensure that the local culture is taken into account.

Training analysts to use structured analytic techniques will also help to address issues with unsupported assessments and recommendation. These techniques should be used in the development of their assessments and policy recommendations. Richards Heuer Jr. and Randolph Pherson think that using such techniques ensures “that the reasoning behind the conclusions is more transparent and readily accepted,” and it also enhances “the collection and interpretation of evidence” (7). Not only are they recommended, but the Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 required that the Director of National Intelligence apply these techniques as required throughout the intelligence enterprise (Heuer and Pherson 9).

Structured analytic techniques were designed to assist the analyst in making his or her reasoning behind an assessment easily identified by other analysts to ensure that it can be reviewed and properly discussed. These techniques help to ensure that dissenting opinions are also considered in the analytical process, not after the assessment is written or in the postmortem of an intelligence failure (Heuer and Pherson 22).

Four such techniques proposed by Heuer and Pherson have particular importance to assessments written in support of counterinsurgency operations. The first is using what they call a “cross-impact matrix” (Heuer and Pherson 31). The cross-impact matrix consists of identifying a list of variables and players that impact a situation and talking through how these different players and variables impact each other (Heuer and Pherson 104). Heuer and Pherson state that this technique is great for understanding complex situations and accounting for a large number of variables (104).

This description of the operational environment definitely applies to counterinsurgency operations and any intelligence focusing on a weak state. Joel Migdal points out the different influences that states have to balance in order to maintain power or implement change. He thinks that states struggle with other internal organizations over who has the right to implement rules governing different behaviors (Migdal 64). These



organizations can be tribes as in the case of the Iraqi Ba'ath Party's attempt to reduce the power of the tribes when the Ba'ath Party came to power (Baram 1–31). The contest is between the state and such institutions of society as tribes, religious institutions, and industry (Migdal 64). A leader uses the state to implement rules and this brings the state into conflict with organizations that believe they should be dictating those specific rules (Migdal 65). In other words, for every action or reform the government makes, there is an organization that is attempting to maintain its authority in confrontation with the state. In cases where the government was weak and lacked the ability to mandate its policy, Migdal identified that it seldom gave up its attempts to implement change. It also did not continue to battle the opposing social institutions. The government reached a sort of *détente* with the social forces that opposed it out of necessity (Migdal 65). Robert Jervis would agree; he states, “It is Political Science 101 that reform from above is very difficult and often leads to disintegration...” (19).

The situation that Migdal discusses of a weak state attempting some sort of change can be characteristic of counterinsurgency. Identifying the groups and institutions that will either support or oppose any policy will help the analyst fill out the cross-impact matrix and further understand the effects of implementing any proposed policy. It will also help in gaining a much better understanding of the situation.

Analysts could also use what Heuer and Pherson call a “Key Assumptions Check” (31). This technique is best used when information is incomplete and analysts are forced to make assumptions about “how things normally work in a country of interest” (Heuer and Pherson 183). Identifying the assumptions assists in the use of the cross-impact matrix also by helping the analyst to consider different interactions between variables (Heuer and Pherson 184). Reviewing multiple times the assumptions that an assessment is based on ensures that the assumptions are still relevant. This should be a continuous process even after the assessment is published. An event that disproves an assumption may dictate the need to rethink the assessment.

The analysts involved in the intelligence failure prior to the Iranian Revolution may have benefitted from this process. Robert Jervis found in his investigation that the analysts constantly assumed that if demonstrations broke out again, the Shah would

respond by cracking down, even though the advice the United States was giving the Shah was to “continue liberalizing” (Jervis 19). A reassessment of the key assumption that the Shah would crack down, taking into account pressure on the Shah to liberalize may have led to the consideration of the possibility that he eventually would not crack down. This would have caused analysts and policymakers to consider what would happen if the Shah decided not to crack down.

The fact that this was not considered also demonstrates that it is important to evaluate assessments after they are published. Once the assessment is published, it is important to determine the accuracy of the assessment. One way this is done is through the use of the “Indicators” technique (Heuer and Pherson 132).

This technique is tough to implement because it requires the identification of measurable or identifiable events that point to specific action taking place in the future. (Heuer and Pherson 132). These indicators help analysts to see change occurring even when it is occurring at a slow pace, as it often does. The indicators help the analysts focus and identify changes so that they do not catch people by surprise (Heuer and Pherson 133). Sir Robert Thompson stated that counterinsurgency is a slow methodical process and that the news media latches onto the “magnetic attraction in large-scale helicopter operations” or other events but the “constructive and beneficial measures are the main features of the campaign and foreign aid” (101–102). Much like the media that Thompson describes, an analyst can become distracted with the explosion of IEDs or other events. Identifying indicators helps them focus on the events that may not be as attention grabbing as massive operations or attacks.

A technique that helps ensure the analyst has considered all possible options is the “Analysis of Competing Hypothesis” (Heuer and Pherson 32). This technique requires the analyst or group of analysts to develop all the possible hypotheses they can come up with and use the evidence they have collected to support or refute each hypothesis (Heuer and Pherson 32). The technique helps to defeat deception by identifying the hypothesis that has the least evidence supporting it, instead of the most evidence (Heuer and Pherson 32). A way of using this in counterinsurgency could be to take another unit’s

assessment or proposed policy and use the evidence that has been collected to prove or refute each assessment.

An individual analyst can use all of these structured analytic techniques if an intelligence section is undermanned. They work best when used by a group of analysts (Heuer and Pherson 221). In a time of globalization with video teleconferences, secure phones, and secure Internet chat it is not required that analysts be sitting next to each other to employ these techniques. They can do it from right in front of their workstation.

In the end, a well-written assessment with reasoning that is transparent and provides policymakers with a recommendation of what to do will be extremely useful. Adding supporting information about who will oppose the policy and might support it also provides ideas for things that can be done to support a proposed policy. Additionally, as the assessment works its way through each echelon, it will have more and more attention brought to it as analysts work to refute or bolster the argument made. It will also foster communication between organizations that disagree over recommendations.

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This thesis looked into the implementation of doctrine to help at least partially solve the problems experienced with the military providing intelligence support to counterinsurgency operations. It did not identify any solutions to the manning issues currently experienced in the military intelligence force structure. MG Flynn and the FM 3-24 both mention this issue in passing, but do not make substantive recommendations on addressing this issue. Intelligence in counterinsurgency is a bottom-up driven process, but the manning of intelligence organizations concentrates the fewest people the nearest to the bottom. Further research into how to bring the intelligence manning into proportion with the requirements is warranted.

### **D. CONCLUSION**

This thesis focused on the problem of the military's contribution to intelligence collection and production in counterinsurgency. The military's intelligence problem was identified as PIR not being properly developed to support effective counterinsurgency

operations. Some of the problem was a lack of intelligence requirements levied from the policymaker level to support counterinsurgency operations. This was only part of the problem because the military should not wait for intelligence guidance. Military doctrine and the use of the mission analysis process provides the intelligence requirements needed to support whatever operations the military is required to conduct.

Joint and service specific doctrine was reviewed along with other literature on counterinsurgency operations to determine what was considered to be necessary to conduct effective counterinsurgency operations. Then a review of two studies conducted by the RAND Corporation was conducted to determine what dictates a successfully employed counterinsurgency campaign. In that review, it was determined that counterinsurgency forces that interdicted tangible support for the insurgency were successful. Additionally, it was determined that counterinsurgency efforts were effective if the counterinsurgent force and the host nation government both effectively implemented policies aimed at defeating the insurgency.

Finally, an assessment was recommended that begins with a policy recommendation and uses structured analytic techniques. The structured analytic techniques help to ensure the completeness of the assessment and the transparency of the reasons behind the assessment. The use of these techniques helps to ensure that these assessments can be adequately reviewed and debated as they move from the ground unit to the policymakers.

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